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Earmarks: I have made a major part of my Congressional career so far to be one of the leaders [along with Jeff Flake (R-AZ)] in the fight against the wasteful and abusive pork spending known as earmarks. I would love to tell you that we have been successful in getting earmarks eliminated or substantially reformed. But no. Gosh, I wish I could tell you that at least they are all being disclosed or not dropped into bills in the dark of night with no hearing. But that hasn't happened either. There has been a bipartisan addiction to these things which continues to this day.

But what we have been successful in doing is raising the issue with the press and the public. Just a couple of years ago, the public didn't even know what was going on with earmarks and the press didn't cover them. But that has all changed. The press now is all over the issue and polls show that the public overwhelmingly wants the practice to stop. Even in Alaska, in which the famed "bridge to nowhere" was to be built and where the earmarks per capita are by far the highest in the country, a majority of the voting public would now give up the pork to see all earmarks go away. Senator John McCain has stated that as president he would veto every spending bill that contained even a single earmark.

A number of reporters are now digging into past earmarks and their connection with the campaign contributions or family members or personal finances of the Congressmen and women who requested them. I read a new story nearly every day from somewhere in the country about another earmark under scrutiny by someone for questionable ethics. Here are some of the most recent reports with a summary and a link to the whole story if you want to read or see it.

Twinkle Toes: Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) garnered \$150,000 for the American Ballet Theatre in New York for "educational activities." Bolstered by \$28 million from private fundraising, The American Ballet Theatre hardly needs a taxpayer hand out. [re](#)
[ad more](#)

Taxpayer Funded Caddy shack: \$3 million for a golf school for children. That's right. \$3 million of your tax money to teach kids to play golf.....out of the DEFENSE budget. Not surprisingly, the money will go to the James E. Clyburn Golf Center.

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Woodstock Museum: \$1,000,000 to create a museum honoring the 1969 Woodstock music festival.

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\$5 Million Parking Spot: Rep. Paul Kanjorski (D-PA) earmarked \$5.6 million for a parking garage next to the "Kanjorski Center" which is currently unoccupied, and the parking garage violates federal construction standards.

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The Big Kahuna: \$1.1 billion in an attempt to put salmon into a river that has run dry. The threshold for success is very small. According to the settlement, if only 500 fish return, the project will be deemed successful. If you do the math, that makes each fish worth \$21 million dollars.

[read more.](#)

Lobster Institute: \$188,000 for Lobster research and education at the University of Maine, some of its accomplishments include: "The Lobster Cam" and Lobster flavored dog biscuits. Taxpayers can thank Senators Olympia Snow(R-ME), Susan Collins(R-ME), and Rep. Thomas Allen (D-ME).

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Made for Walking: \$98,000 to develop a walking tour of Boydton, Virginia. Population: 454. Courtesy of Rep. Virgil Goode (R-VA)

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So what happens now? The spending culture inside the beltway in favor of earmarks is enormously powerful. Myself and the rest of our band of earmark warriors will try again to get the entire House or the Republican caucus to adopt a one year moratorium on earmarks until we adopt changes to reform the process and stop some of the abuses described above.

I'll keep you informed of our progress. But even if we fail, we will not give up. And you shouldn't either. Because eventually, the beltway crowd cannot ignore the will of the people.

Until next time, I remain respectfully,

Congressman John Campbell